

Following on instructions recently received by the Educational Branch of the War Office relative to shorthand-writing being introduced as an 'extra' for a first-class certificate of education and offering additional pay as a reward for the services of those qualified, Lieut.-Col. Smith, commanding at Arbour Hill, with the sanction of the General Officer Commanding Dublin District, caused it to be published in the morning papers that a class for the study of shorthand should be formed for those desirous to learn the subject. The invitation was eagerly responded to, and on Sept. 15 a class of eighty-two War Office cadets, non-commissioned officers and men assembled in the gentlemen's school at Arbour Hill, when the proceedings were opened by the General Officer Commanding. The conspicuous absence of a woman's candidate in an encouraging address pointing out the advantages of the subject in the different branches of the service and the necessity of the cadets being able to take shorthand notes of their own proceedings, and the necessity of their being able to take shorthand notes of their own proceedings, and the necessity of their being able to take shorthand notes of their own proceedings.

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One of the most urgent improvements required is to increase the accommodation, so that numerous prisoners may be bunched together in one cell. That is necessary, not so much from a hygienic standpoint, as for the purpose of lessening the number of criminals. At present a prison may not unjustly be called school of crime, for when many prisoners are kept together for one month, travelling to and fro, they are almost sure to be infected with crime. Some time ago a prisoner thrown into prison for robbery lived in the same cell with political offenders who had been connected with the Satekura rebellion. He was so far converted that he emerged from jail as a respectable and amiable occupation, and earned a small competence. But other convicts, who had lived in the same cell with him and who were also robbers, annoyed him so often with unwelcome visits that he could no longer continue his respectable and law-abiding career, but drifted once more into the community of robbers.—Japan Mail.

ROYAL YACHTS IN DANGER.

Towards the end of the sixties, Mr Gray was appointed royal pilot, and had the piloting of the *Victoria* and *Albert* whenever the Queen or any member of the Royal Family was travelling to the Continent. For eighteen years he held this important post, which speaks a great deal for the trust reposed in his knowledge and care. Nor did anything ever happen to the royal yacht to show that this confidence was misplaced. A little while, however, did once occur to the *Victoria* and *Albert*, which occasioned a slight passing sensation at Brighton and startled some of the people on board. As it happened, however, there were no passengers in the yacht being simply on its homeward voyage from Southampton to Flushing to bring over some royal relatives. They were going along with a south-west wind, and when about ten miles east of the Oars lightship—consequently nearly abreast of Brighton—a heavy rain struck the vessel on the starboard quarter, and broke up the Queen's barge to pieces. "It was blowing hard," says Mr Gray, "though not particularly rough, and we could hardly account for the accident. However, the barge was smashed to bits, and some portions of it being the Queen's arms and brooch, she went ashore at Brighton, and being recognised, caused no little stir. When we reached Flushing there were telegrams awaiting us from the Admiralty, inquiring what had happened. Something much more serious occurred, when when the Queen was piloting the Russian Imperial yacht *Duke* from Copenhagen to the Thames with the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh on board, together with a large party of well-known people, including Admiral Popoff and Lord Mordaunt. When Mr Gray's account of the accident had reached the Admiralty, the weather immediately after we left Copenhagen, and a rough time nearly all the way over. There was a high sea with strong winds in the lower part of the Cattegat, where we washed part of the figurehead away. When we got near the Skaw the wind became more favorable, and the sea of our altered course, though we still had a hard sea-ride, which, as we got into the North Sea, increased in severity. Then it came on rain and slack, which did not improve matters. Indeed, it turned out a fearful bad night, and the Duke and Duchess could scarcely see anything. What now happened I have never been able to account for; it is a mystery to me, as it was to fill on board. Towards morning we found ourselves among the sands off Yarmouth. I thought we were forty miles away from there, to my astonishment, on our eighth night of the *Newport* lightship. I only saw it for an instant; but there was no mistaking its three lights. We were going right for it in the direction we had come, and I knew that to get there we must have come right over Yarmouth. The north of Yarmouth. We had run a fearful risk; but it happened to be high water, and so we got over without touching, and I remember the night well, as the Duke of Edinburgh was on the bridge till eleven o'clock. There was a great commotion when it was discovered that we were so near a consultation took place in the chartroom. I had to go down. The captain could not speak a word of English, but the executive officer could, and so could Admiral Popoff. The Admiral said, "What is the danger?" I said, "I think it might be a lightship." He said, "How has the ship got there?" I said, "That I can't account for anyhow." Then the Admiral said, "The light that you say showed three lights the officer's watch says showed only two." The Admiral said, "What is the danger?" I said, "I think it might be a lightship." He said, "How has the ship got there?" I said, "That I can't account for anyhow." Then the Admiral said, "The light that you say showed three lights the officer's watch says showed only two." 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